(c) whether it would be made mandatory for the foreign company to transfer this technology to ONGC within the period of proposed agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) New technologies are beneficial for increasing production from old oil wells producing sub-optimally.

Oil And Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) is implementing proven new technologies for such wells. Various well techniques like drilling of horizontal and multilateral wells by side-track in old wells, intelligent well completion, workover, stimulation, hydro-fracturing, acidisation etc. are being implemented to augment oil production, wherever feasible.

(b) ONGC inducts only proven equipment and technologies. In case of new technology, pilot studies are carried out before full scale implementation.

In-house expertise is available in ONGC for evaluating advanced technologies. However, experts are also hired wherever necessary.

(c) Engineers and scientists from ONGC are always associated during implementation of any new technology in order to gain expertise for future implementation.

Indo-Iran-Pakistan Pipeline Project

376. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) how much progress has been made in the construction of the proposed India-Iran-Pakistan pipeline; and

(b) by when the final deal may be expected to form up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) India has been pursuing the import of natural gas from Iran through the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) transnational gas pipeline.

Such multilateral projects involve protracted discussions, as all the aspects have to be carefully examined and deliberated upon to the satisfaction of the participating countries to protect each country's interests as also to avoid any future problems in the successful operation of the project. As such, the agreement will only be signed after satisfactory resolution of issues under discussion.

Loss of Gas bid in Myanmar

377. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether is it a fact that India lost the gas bid to China in Myanmar due to spat between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and the Ministry of External Affairs;

(b) if so, what will be its impact on future overseas bidding in the field of oil and natural gas;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Ministry did not make serious efforts to secure gas in Myanmar;

(d) if so, whether any responsibility has been fixed by the Ministry; and

(e) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No, sir

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas keenly pursued the import of natural gas from Myanmar. Government of Myanmar issued Letter of Intent on February 11, 2004 and subsequently signed an MoU on March 9, 2006 during the visit of President of India to Myanmar, acknowledging GAIL as a preferential buyer of gas from A1 and A3 blocks in Myanmar.

However, in August 2006, Myanmar invited bids for selling natural gas from A1 and A3 offshore blocks. GAIL submitted its bid. Subsequently, Government of Myanmar reviewed their decision to sell this gas through the pipeline route and invited bids for sale of 3.5 MMTPA of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). GAIL again submitted its bid. The matter was discussed in various meetings held between Government of Myanmar and Consortium in January, February and March, 2007.

In the meeting held in February 2007 between Myanmar Government and Petro China, Myanmar Government decided that the gas from A1 and A3 blocks would be sold to China through the pipeline route. This development was conveyed to the consortium partners by Myanmar Government during a meeting held at Nay Pyi Taw (NPT) on March 16, 2007. GAIL impressed upon the other partners and the Myanmar Government that GAIL's pipeline offer was still the most competitive and offered optimum value for them due to proximity of India to these fields. However, Myanmar Government stuck to their decision to sell the gas to China.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of the reply to part (c) above.

Hike in fuel prices

378. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the oil PSUs, namely Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. are losing revenue on account of selling petrol, diesel, LPG and kerosene below the cost price;

(b) if so, the revenue so far lost during the current fiscal;

(c) whether Government propose to hike the prices of the fuels to overcome the above losses;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and.